

Remarks

The present amendment is being filed in response to the Official Action mailed on June 16, 2004. That Official Action objected to the drawings due to an informality and as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5). The specification was objected to due to informalities. Claims 25-33 were objected to due to an informality in claim 25. Claims 1, 2, 12, 25, 34, 35 and 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Shirai U.S. Patent No. 5,502,547 ("Shirai"). Claims 1, 6, 7, 12, 25, 29, 34, 36 and 41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Buchanan et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,487,383 ("Buchanan"). Claims 13-24 were allowed. Claims 3-5, 8-11, 26-28, 30-33, 37-40 and 42-45 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 1, 25, 34 and 41 have been amended to be more clear and distinct. Claims 3, 4, 8, 26, 27, 30, 37 and 42 have been written in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1-45 are presently pending, with claims 13-24 standing allowed and claims 3-5, 8-11, 26-28, 30-33, 37-40 and 42-45 indicated to be allowable.

The Drawing Objections

Proposed drawing corrections for Figure 2 and Figure 3 are submitted for the examiner's approval. Formal drawings will be filed in due course.

The Specification Objections

Pursuant to the examiner's suggestion, paragraphs [0018] and [0021] have been amended to use the term "magnetic roller assembly" and to clarify that "mag roller assembly" is a shorthand reference to "magnetic roller assembly". Paragraph [0021] has also been amended to correct a typographical error.

The Claim Objection

Claim 25 has been amended to correct a typographical error.

The Art Rejections

Regarding the relied upon art, Shirai describes a sealing device for use in a process cartridge, such as a toner cartridge. As disclosed at col. 7, lines 30-35, Shirai teaches that the sealing device C1 includes three individual sealing members (16a, 16b and 16c) that

are attached to a holder 15. “A first sealing member 16a and a second sealing member 16b, in a row, and a third sealing member 16c, adjacent to them, adhere to the holder 15....” Shirai, col. 7, lines 59-62. Each of these sealing members is “independently attached to the holder 15.” Shirai, col. 8, lines 27 and 28 (emphasis added). See Fig. 8 of Shirai for a perspective view of the sealing device C1. When the sealing device is installed in a process cartridge, each of the individual sealing members contacts a particular location on a cleaning frame 12b.

Buchanan discloses a seal 75 used to seal the end portions of a developing roller, a doctor blade, and a developer housing. One side of the seal 75 comprises a blade seal portion 73 and a rotary seal portion 70. The opposing side of seal 75 comprises a biasing means 72. Both seal portions 70 and 73 and the biasing means 72 are formed as a single unitary piece via a molding technique, such as injection molding. See col. 6, line 47 through col. 7, line 40 of Buchanan.

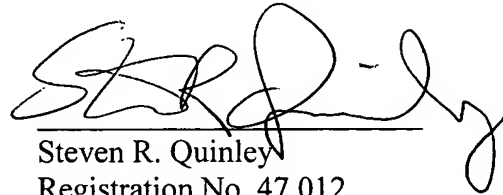
In contrast to the relied upon art, the multi-level seal of the present invention, as claimed in amended claim 1, includes “a first sealing portion...and at least one other sealing portion attached to the first sealing portion and partially detached from the first sealing portion by a plurality of slits...” (emphasis added). The relied upon art does not teach such a multi-level seal as presently claimed. Shirai discloses a trio of sealing members that are attached to a holder utilizing an adhesive. Buchanan teaches a unitary seal member having a biasing portion for holding the seal in place. Neither of these references discloses at least one other sealing portion partially detached from the first sealing portion by a plurality of slits as claimed in claim 1. Thus, applicants believe that independent claim 1, and claims 2, 5-7 and 12 depending therefrom, define over the relied upon art and are in order for allowance.

Similarly, claims 25, 34 and 41 have been amended to recite “at least one other sealing portion attached to the first sealing portion and partially detached from the first sealing portion by a plurality of slits....” Thus, applicants believe that independent claims 25, 34 and 41, and the associated dependent claims, define over the relied upon art and are in order for allowance.

Conclusion

All of the pending claims appearing to be in order for allowance, prompt allowance of the present application is requested. Any questions regarding this application may be raised by telephone with the undersigned if it is considered that processing of this application will be expedited thereby.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. R. Quinley', is written over a horizontal line.

Steven R. Quinley
Registration No. 47,012
Static Control Components, Inc.
3010 Lee Avenue
Sanford, NC 27331
(919) 774-3808 ext. 1320